

OPINION

CIA covert action at what price?

By Stansfield Turner

CONGRESS faces an imminent decision on whether to continue funding the CIA's covert activities in Central America. Over and above the merits and demerits of the actions themselves, the Congress should consider the potential impact of these activities on the CIA's future capabilities. I believe that continuation of what is going on in Central America could seriously damage the agency.

There are two dangers: that Congress may tighten its controls over such activities unduly; and that the CIA, which has rebounded nicely after suffering great criticism following the Church committee's investigation of 1975-76, will be subjected to another buffeting.

Public attitudes toward the CIA are today being colored by such reports as:

- A story in The Christian Science Monitor on May 8 charging that the CIA had helped organize, finance, and train Salvadorean intelligence units that engaged in "death squad" activities.

- A press release by Sen. Jesse Helms a few days later accusing the CIA of covertly contributing funds to the electoral campaign of José Napoleón Duarte for president of El Salvador.

- A May 19 Washington Post story asserting that the CIA attempted to circumvent congressional limitations on covert-action funding for Central America by asking the Saudi Arabians and Israelis to provide the money.

Accurate or not, these reports revive the distorted image of the CIA as a "rogue elephant" which came out of the Church committee.

The CIA should not have forgotten the serious damage that criticism did. Whatever endangers public support for the CIA endangers the CIA.

It should also be of significant concern to the CIA when it and Congress have as sharp differences as they have had in this instance. For example:

- In December 1982 Congress and the CIA were so far apart that Congress passed an unclassified law restricting these supposedly secret activities. With this confirmation of supposedly covert operations, the CIA could hardly continue them with any hope of secrecy.

- Last April the administration was forced to all but confirm that the covert action had been expanded to the mining of Nicaragua's harbors. Sen. Barry Goldwater,

chairman of the Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence, complained bitterly that he had not been adequately informed; CIA Director William Casey apologized.

In this atmosphere Congress will likely legislate more and more stringent rules governing the CIA. It has been tightening its control over CIA covert activities since December of '74. Then the Congress required, through the "Hughes-Ryan Amendment," that the President notify it "in a timely manner" of all covert actions. The Congress was uneasy that "timely" might not be soon enough. In 1980 it rewrote the law making it explicit that the President would notify it *before* the CIA's commencing any covert action in all but the most exceptional circumstances.

What the Congress has been saying to the President and the CIA for 10 years, then, is something like: "We are nervous about possible overuse of covert action. We want you to proceed cautiously, preferably in consultation with us."

The next move by Congress could be to require that the CIA obtain congressional approval for all covert actions, without exception. Such a move could impair the CIA's capability to do covert actions. In my experience several covert actions were highly desirable for the country, but could not have been undertaken if prior notification of the Congress had been required. That is not because Congress is not trustworthy, but because it would be unfair to ask individuals to risk their lives when more than the absolute minimum number of people know what they are doing.

Why has the administration accepted these several risks to our long-term intelligence capabilities? Because it hopes this covert action will be so successful that everyone will cheer and forget the acrimony it has engendered. That might have been the case in the World War II days of the OSS, but not today when the country has created a system of congressional committees on intelligence to act as surrogates for the public in overseeing intelligence activities. It is a system that places restraints on the executive department's use of the intelligence apparatus, but in so doing brings intelligence as close to being part of our normal democratic process of government as the inherent secrecy of intelligence permits.

Stansfield Turner is former director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The USIA Blacklist

As part of what some senators contend is the politicization of the USIA, Reagan administration appointees have banned from a USIA overseas speakers program Americans thought to disagree with the policies or the philosophy of the administration. USIA officials kept a blacklist of people who had been rejected for the American Participants (speakers) Program. Following is a copy of the list with biographical information where available:

Abramovitz, Morton — Former U.S. ambassador to Thailand, presently American ambassador to Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks in Europe.

Agee, Philip — Former CIA agent who turned against the agency. This name was put on the list as a joke by USIA staffers who disapproved of having a blacklist. Agee was never under consideration for USIA speakers' program.

Albright, Madeline — Served on National Security Council staff as congressional liaison officer during Carter administration. She served on the staff of Edmund Muskie when he was in the Senate.

Baldwin, James — Author of "Notes of a Native Son," "Another Country," "Nobody Knows My Name" and other books.

Bender, Jerry — Professor of international relations at USC. A critic of Reagan administration policy in Southern Africa.

Bialer, Seweryn — Polish-born professor of Soviet studies at Columbia. He is the author of "Stalin's Successors," "Stalin and the Generals" and numerous other works.

Blacker, Coit Dennis — Research associate on arms control at Stanford. An expert on the Soviet military.

Bosworth, Barry — Economist at the Brookings Institution. Served during the Carter administration on Council of Wage and Price Stability.

Bradlee, Benjamin — Executive editor of the Washington Post.

Bremont, Marshall Mrs. — Wife of the U.S. ambassador to Iceland. Author, under the pen-name Pamela Sanders, of "Miranda," a novel that shocked some in official circles.

Brinkley, David — The TV journalist.

Brooks, Jack — Democratic congressman, chairman of House Government Committee on Government Operations.

Bundy, McGeorge — President Kennedy's national security adviser, former president of the Ford Foundation.

Burger, Clair — Former Republican congressman from California.

Burton, Phil — The late Democratic congressman from San Francisco.

Caleo, David P. — Teaches at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). His specialty is Europe and the Western Alliance.

Cetrell, Joseph — Member of the Califor-

nia Democratic State Central Committee. Served as Hubert Humphrey's campaign manager in California.

Chisholm, Shirley — Former Democratic congresswoman.

Chutkow, Paul —

Coffey, Joseph — Professor at the University of Pittsburgh, where he is the director of the Center for International Security Studies. West Point graduate who reached rank of colonel in the Army. Writes on arms control and security.

Cooper, Richard — Harvard economist, undersecretary of State for economic affairs in the Carter administration.

Cronkite, Walter — Yes, Walter Cronkite.

Cummings, Robert J. — Director of African Studies at Howard University.

Davis, James —

de Borchgrave, Arnaud — Former Newsweek correspondent, author of "Spike," a political novel that raises the question of Soviet influence in the American press.

Diamond, Sigmund — Baltimore-born, Hopkins-educated history professor at Columbia. Author of "The Reputation of the American Businessman."

Dillon, Dorothy — Director of the Washington Center for Latin American Studies. Formerly at the State Department and USIA, where she was an assistant director.

Dinerstein, Herbert S. — Soviet affairs expert at SAIS, author of "The Making of a Missile Crisis: October, 1962."

Dominquez, Jorge — Cuban-born political scientist at Harvard, author of "Cuba: Order and Revolution."

Downey, Thomas — Democratic congressman from New York.

Drew, Elizabeth — Washington correspondent for the New Yorker.

Eldersveld, Samuel J. — University of Michigan political scientist, a specialist on political parties.

Etzione, Amatai — Professor of sociology at George Washington. He has just published a book on corruption in government.

Fagen, Richard R. — Political scientist at Stanford, specialist on Cuba and Latin America.

Fallows, James — Former Carter speechwriter, now an editor at Atlantic Monthly.

Feinberg, Richard — Served in the State Department during the Carter administration, a Latin America expert.

Feith, Douglas — Special assistant to Richard Perle, the hawkish assistant secretary of Defense.

Fitzgerald, Frances — Author of "Fire in the Lake: The Vietnamese and Americans in Vietnam" and "America Revised."

Friedan, Betty — The feminist, author of "The Feminine Mystique."

Harvard economist.

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